United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1148
26 May 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali launches appeal for emergency drought relief for southern African nations; simultaneous appeal launched by President of Botswana, on behalf of Southern African Development Coordination Conference.

+ Secretary-General expresses concern about recent escalation of violence in Middle East; Lebanon, in letter to Secretary-General, denounces "continuing Israeli aggression" against its territory.

+ United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) takes action on further reports of "ethnic cleansing"; offers shelter to 22 Croats reportedly driven from their homes on Sunday.

+ Egyptian Foreign Minister, in letter to Secretary-General, says Egyptians are questioning the silence of United Nations on tragic events in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Central Emergency Revolving Fund reaches target of $50 million; Secretary-General taking steps to activate the Fund immediately.

+ Secretary-General, on visit to Canada, tells First International Young Leaders Conference that a strong, secure sense of nationality is needed to allay fears aroused by rapid globalization and avert ethnic conflict.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, launching an Appeal for $854 million to assist 10 drought-stricken countries in southern Africa, told a meeting at Headquarters this morning: "The lives of millions of men, women and children are directly at risk. Without adequate assistance, a great mass of people in the region will rapidly face starvation and epidemics arising out of malnutrition and lack of care."

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The Appeal was also launched simultaneously by President Quett Masire of Botswana, speaking on behalf of the countries of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

A pledging conference will be held in Geneva on 1 and 2 June, under the joint auspices of the United Nations and the SADCC. The Secretary-General this morning called on the donor countries to sow the seeds of hope in "that drought-baked soil" of southern Africa.

Food relief has already begun arriving at African ports. Shipments of maize totalling 65,000 tonnes, channelled through the World Food Programme (WFP), arrived last week at the South African port of Durban and at Dar es Salaam in the United Republic of Tanzania. The countries targeted for assistance are Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The governing body of the WFP is meeting in Rome this week to discuss key issues of world hunger and food aid. Among the major problems it is examining are its disaster relief operations in southern Africa and in the Horn of Africa.

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The Secretary-General has expressed concern about the recent escalation of violence in the Middle East in which Israelis, Palestinians and Lebanese have been killed. In a statement today, the Mr. Boutros-Ghali deplored the loss of innocent life and said he believed the continuation of hostilities could only heighten tensions in the region and might jeopardize current efforts to resolve the Arab/Isreali conflict. The Secretary-General urged all sides to exercise maximum restraint so that the momentum achieved in the peace process might be sustained.

In related development, Lebanon has denounced what it called "continuing Israeli aggression" against its territory. In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 21 May, the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, Khalil Makkawi cited in particular the bombings of villages in the south. The letter called on the Security Council to urge Israel to end its policy of aggression in Lebanon. Such a policy, Mr. Makkawi said, ran counter to ongoing peace initatives and would ultimately cause that process to to fail.

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In Yugoslavia, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) is taking action on further reports of "ethnic cleansing". The Spokesman for the Secretary-General said today that 22 Croats, who were driven from their homes on Sunday, had been offered shelter by UNPROFOR at its base at Klisa, where they told civilian police officers that they were reluctant to return to their homes, which they feared had already been occupied by Serbs. The group also reported a climate of terrorism characterized by acts of criminal intimidation, the Spokesman said.

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The Force was now interviewing all the adults in the group for details of the circumstances of their forced departure and UNPROFOR patrols had been introduced immediately to protect the homes of the expelled victims.

The Force had also informed the Deputy Prime Minister of Croatia of the attempted expulsion and was investigating other recent incidents of the kind. Prosecution dossiers were being prepared on the "terrorists identified as responsible for those criminal acts", the Spokesman said.

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In a related development, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Amr Moussa, has expressed deep concern at the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 20 May, Mr. Moussa said the inhabitants of that country were "the daily and systematic victims of violence and massacres to obliterate their identity and crush their aspirations to freedom and independence". The Foreign Minister said Egyptians had begun to ask questions about the silence of the international community and the United Nations regarding acts which it said could only be described as "genocide directed against the inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina".

He urged the United Nations to intervene as a matter of urgency to ensure protection of the people, to "compel the forces of aggression to withdraw immediately" and to work for a peaceful settlement that would guarantee the sovereignty and independence of the young State.

Bosnia and Herzegovina was admitted to membership in the Nations on Friday, 22 May.

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The Central Emergency Revolving Fund has reached its target of $50 million and the Secretary-General is taking the necessary steps to make the Fund immediately operational, according to an announcement at Headquarters today.

At a press briefing following the announcement, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Eliasson, said the Fund would be "a tool which could be used quickly" by the Secretary-General to meet the most acute humanitarian needs around the world, particularly in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, and Yugoslavia.

The Fund, which was established to help ensure a more effective response by the United Nations system to the world's disasters, received $47 million in pledges last February. The $50 million target was reached on Friday May 22, when the United States, Norway and Canada pledged the final amounts.

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The rapid globalization of the world was accompanied by growing anxiety and the proliferation of various forms of nationalism and micro-nationalism, the Secretary-General told the First International Youth Young Leaders Conference, sponsored by the Jeanne Sauvé Youth Foundation, in Montreal, Quebec, on Sunday. But, he pointed out, the "nationalism/globalization" combination, replaced perhaps by the idea of "nationalities/universality", was crucial to the future well-being of the world. That dialectic, he told the conference, was the very raison d'être of the United Nations.

In a speech greeted with a standing ovation, he defined the nation as a common "will to live", a shared "access code to the outside world" which transcended the immediate allegiances of family, clan and village, and which constituted a first step towards the universal civilization.

"In today's world, if you destroy nations, you will not have a vast universal allegiance, you will have tribes and primary ties, whether ethnic or religious, as in Somalia or in Yugoslavia; and, subsequently, you will also have super-States which exploit or dominate them. Bypassing nation-States is therefore a very uncertain course, which may even be dangerous for the future of the planet."

The upcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, he said, would "demonstrate what a well-ordered world could be, a world of nations which cooperate in order to meet the challenges posed by the very rapid globalization of modern problems."

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1149
27 May 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Canada requests urgent meeting of Security Council "with a view to imposing economic, trade and oil sanctions against the authorities in Belgrade".

+ In separate development, the Security Council - in regular 60-day review - decides that sanctions against Iraq should be maintained.

+ Fact-finding mission to Nagorno-Karabakh region, Azerbaijan and Armenia holding substantive meetings with senior officials of both Governments, according to United Nations Spokesman.

+ Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA) protests violent incident in Gaza Strip involving Israeli settlers, local school children and UNWRA international staff.

+ Margaret Joan Anstee, the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Angola, in briefing at Headquarters, says United Nations Verification Mission in Angola (UNAVEM) is going as well as can be expected after 16-year civil war.

+ Secretary-General met yesterday with Foreign Minister of Morocco, in connection with moves to reactivate peace plan for Western Sahara.

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Canada has requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council "with a view to imposing economic, trade and oil sanctions against the authorities in Belgrade". In a letter to the President of the Security Council, dated 26 May, the Permanent Representative of Canada, Louise Frechette, expressed concern over what she called the "continuing dangerous situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the other ex-republics of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia".

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Canada also asked the Council to consider steps to allow United Nations-escorted humanitarian aid convoys to reach needy civilians and to open Sarajevo airport to facilitate humanitarian activities.

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In a separate development, the Security Council has decided that sanctions against Iraq should be maintained. It held consultations this morning to consider the situation between Iraq and Kuwait and to conduct its regular 60-day review of the sanctions -- imposed against Iraq as part of the cease-fire resolution 687 (1921).

In a statement issued following the consultations, on behalf of the Council members, the President of the Security Council, Peter Hohenfellner (Austria), said: "After hearing all the opinions expressed in the course of the consultations, the President of the Council concluded that there still was no agreement that the necessary conditions existed for a modification of the regime...."

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The fact-finding mission sent by the Secretary-General to assess the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, Azerbaijan and Armenia has been holding substantive meetings with senior officials of both Governments, Spokesman Francois Guiliani said today. Under discussion were the political and humanitarian aspects of the conflict, and in Baku the mission had met with a number of experts on humanitarian affairs and international relations.

The team members were expected to visit the Nagorno-Karabakh area either yesterday or today, with the understanding, said the Spokesman, that both sides would guarantee their safety.

The mission is due back in New York on Friday, 29 May.

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An attack on a Jewish settler in the central Gaza Strip today led to an attempt by a group of settlers to attack a school in the area, according to a report to the Secretary-General by the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNWRA), protesting the incident.

The Secretary-General's Spokesman, quoting the report, said that an Israeli settler (a rabbi) was stabbed by a young Palestinian at a road junction. A passing motorist tried to ram the two men with his vehicle, apparently in an attempt to halt the attack. The Palestinian, who was injured, was evacuated by Israeli helicopter to a hospital in Israel. The rabbi died, though it was not clear whether his death resulted from stab wounds or the impact of the car.

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A large crowd of settlers then gathered outside an UNWRA school and threatened to attack it. They threw stones at the school, rammed a fence with a tractor and tried to break into classrooms before Israeli Defence Force soldiers eventually managed to remove them from the premises.

With the help of the security forces, the Civil Administration and UNWRA international staff, the approximately 214 children (aged between seven and 12) and their UNWRA teachers were slowly evacuated from the school, with care taken to keep them out of sight of the settlers.

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Margaret Joan Anstee, the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Angola, told the press at a briefing at Headquarters today that the United Nations Verification Mission in Angola (UNIVEM) was a "difficult operation" but was going as well as could be expected. With only 124 days left before the country's first multi-purpose elections, on 29 and 30 September, she said, "we really are racing against the clock".

She said it was remarkable that, after 16 years of very violent civil war, since the peace accords were signed last year there had been no major breaches of the cease-fire. In a progress report on UNAVEM II, Mrs. Anstee said that there were humanitarian and security problems, with a massive proliferation of arms. But she expressed optimism about the success of the mission. There was clear will on both sides to go through with the peace process and people wanted to get on with the next stage of the country's development, she said.

Mrs. Anstee said that the United Nations role was limited, one of verification and observation - not organizing or supervising the elections. Donor coutries, through the United Nations Development Programme, were providing $12 million in technical assistance and the international community was also assisting in land-mine clearance. "This should be a finite operation," she said, adding that she hoped that by October UNAVEM II's role would be successfully completed.

* * *

The Secretary-General met yesterday with the Foreign Minister of Morocco, Abdellatif Filali, who was seeking clarification on recent discussions held with the two major parties to the conflict in Western Sahara, aimed at reactivating the peace plan for the region.

The Permanent Representative of Morocco, Ahmed Anoussi, and the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Western Sahara, Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan, also attended yesterday's meeting. According to a statement issued by the Secretary-General's Office, it was held in "a positive atmosphere, and served to confirm Morocco's readiness to discuss measures that might be adopted in order to facilitate the implementation of the plan which calls for the holding of a referendum in Western Sahara under United Nations auspices".

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It was agreed that the Secretary-General's Special Representative would "immediately pursue talks with each of the parties". Talks would be held initially in New York, where they were expected to continue over the next few weeks.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1150
28 May 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General submits report to Security Council on humanitarian situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, citing various options for armed protection of relief deliveries.

+ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata expresses "surprise and concern" over Executive Order issued by President George Bush on 24 May regarding Haitian boat people.

+ Commander of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia holds meetings with leaders of Yugolsav National Army and Croatian Army Command.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today submitted a report to the Security Council providing an analysis of the various options for the protection of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In his report, dated 26 May, the Secretary-General stated that "if it is not possible to achieve the negotiation of, or respect for, agreements for the protection of humanitarian relief deliveries" it might be necessary to consider armed protection of such deliveries. Citing various options for protection while pointing to the risk of hostile action, he said the main danger for United Nations armed protection of road convoys would "not come from road blocks, which would be comparatively easy to deal with", but would come from fire by mortars and artillery located some distance from the road. "For some of the parties the infliction of hardship on civilians is essentially a war aim, as it leads to the desired movements of population from certain areas", the Secretary-General said. He added that "there appears to be a predisposition to use force to obstruct relief supplies".

The Secretary-General said in his report that it was for the Security Council to decide whether to deploy United Nations troops to undertake protection of international humanitarian aid. At the same time, he warned that any mandate requiring United Nations troops to take hostile or coercive action against certain factions in Bosnia and Herzegovina could make it "more

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difficult to secure the cooperation" which the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) would need to fulfil its mandate in Croatia. He said the warring parties must be persuaded to conclude and honour agreements permitting the unimpeded delivery of relief supplies to all suffering civilians in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Secretary-General has asked Jan Eliasson, the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, to follow the matter closely and facilitate the early negotiation of agreements on humanitarian assistance to Sarajevo and other destinations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Members of the Security Council are holding bilateral consultations on the Secretary-General's report as well as on the request by Canada for an urgent meeting of the Council "with a view to imposing economic, trade and oil sanctions against the authorities in Belgrade". (S/24000)

* * *

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, in a letter sent yesterday to the Under-Secretary of State of the United States, expressed her "surprise and concern" over the Executive Order issued on 24 May by President George Bush regarding Haitian boat people.

That order decreed that instead of the United States Coast Guard taking Haitians it rescued at sea to the United States Navy base at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba, where until then they had been interviewed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, they were to be taken back to Haiti. Applications for asylum are now to be made at an office established in Port au Prince.

"I am deeply disturbed that the Executive Order denies those Haitians genuinely in need of international protection the opportunity to present their claims, thus exposing them to risk upon their return to Haiti," she wrote.

According to a statement issued by her Office, Mrs. Ogata has asked her Deputy High Commissioner, M. Douglas Stafford, to lead a delegation to Washington and other capitals in the region "to actively seek a solution to the tragic plight of Haitian asylum seekers that would ensure the principle of non-return of refugees to the country of origin".

The statement mentions the fact that this month the Organization of American States reiterated its concern about "continual violations of human rights ... in Haiti" and says that other reports of serious human rights abuses and violence since the overthrow of the democratically elected Government of Haiti "continue to be cause for great concern".

* * *

The Commander of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia, General Satish Nambiar, who is currently in Croatia, held meetings today with leaders of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) and the Croatian Army Command,

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according to a United Nations spokesman. Following the meetings, he announced that the two sides had "confirmed the withdrawal of all heavy artillery beyond the lines of confrontation". The Force Commander said UNPROFOR had "no illusions about the difficulty of the task before it. "We are working in the context of an armed struggle fueled by suspicion, hostility and even hatred on both sides", he said. "It is essential that we have the full cooperation of both sides if we are to succeed in our mission."

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1151
29 May 1992

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ Security Council holds consultations on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ More than 22,500 Sudanese refugees have crossed the Kenyan border today, according to a report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the situation in the Horn of Africa.

+ Security Council extends mandate of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for another six months, until end of November.

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The Security Council is continuing consultations today concerning the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before the Council is the Secretary-General's report describing various options for armed protection of deliveries of humanitarian aid to the region as well as a draft resolution sponsored by Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and the United States proposing steps to restore peace in the area, including sanctions against the Belgrade authorities.

The Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, Sir David Hannay, said today that the Council would take action on the draft resolution by the end of the weekend. He emphasized that sanctions against Bosnia and Herzegovina would "be a reluctant next step for the Council".

The Vice-President of Yugoslavia, Branko Kostic, has expressed his country's "immense disappointment and indignation" at being accused of committing aggression against against Bosnia and Herzegovina, "without any arguments being offered to back up such accusations".

In a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 25 May, Mr. Kostic, while reiterating his Government's support for United Nations peace efforts in the region, described the option of sanctions against Yugoslavia as "deeply unfair and wrong". He said "sanctions taken against Yugoslavia can most certainly

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inflict a great deal of harm, materially and politically ... but they are certainly not the way to deal with the tragedy of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina".

* * *

Following a new eruption of the civil war in Southern Sudan yesterday, more than 22,500 Sudanese refugees -- including 12,500 unaccompanied minors -- streamed across the Kenyan border today. According to a report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the situation in the Horn of Africa, thousands more Sudanese are heading for the Kenyan border.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, released $500,000 from her emergency fund to provide urgently needed relief supplies for the new refugees. On 15 May, she appealed to donors for $34 million for the growing emergency in Kenya, but -- according to the report -- as yet no firm pledges have been received.

The new wave of refugees brings to 283,000 the number of Somali, Ethiopian and Sudanese asylum-seekers in Kenya, most of them fleeing from war, drought and famine in their own countries. Since last October, Somali and Ethiopian refugees have been crossing the border at a rate of 1,000 to 2,000 a day. Many of them are suffering from severe dehydration and malnutrition and many have serious war wounds.

The relief programmes set up to help them are a coordinated effort by the United Nations agencies, non-governmental relief organizations, the Government of Kenya and the United Nations "Operation Lifeline Sudan".

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The Security Council this morning decided to renew until 30 November the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) which has been supervising the cease-fire between Israel and Syria since 1974.

Under its unanimous resolution, the Council called on the Secretary-General to report by the end of the new six-month mandate period on developments in the area and on measures taken to implement Security Council resolution 338 of 1973. In that resolution, adopted following the 1973 hostilities, the Council called for a cease-fire and for the parties to start implementing all parts of resolution 242 (1967), which embodied principles for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

The Secretary-General had stated in his report to the Council last week that "despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector, the situation in the Middle East as a whole continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspect of the Middle East problem can be reached".

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has announced the establishment of a Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

The purpose of the Committee is to develop confidence-building measures and ways to promote arms restraint and development in the subregion of Central Africa. The membership of the Committee will comprise Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Zaire -- the 10 States members of the Economic Community of Central African States.

The Committee will shortly be holding its organizational meeting at the ministerial level in Yaounde, Cameroon.

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Prepared by Central News

DH/1152
1 June 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Chief Military Observer of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia negotiates cease-fire with parties involved in Yugoslav conflict; meanwhile, Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina says shelling has resumed in Sarajevo.

+ Security Council imposes wide-ranging sanctions against Yugoslavia with immediate effect, in an effort to end the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Japan, United States, Canada and Switzerland announce pledges at International Pledging Conference on Drought Situation in Southern Africa, in Geneva.

+ Secretary-General leaves New York for opening of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro on Wednesday, 3 June; visit to Uruguay and Chile will follow.

+ World leaders to convene at United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June.

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A United Nations spokesman reported today that General John Wilson, Chief Military Observer of United Nations Protection Force Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), had negotiated a cease-fire with the parties involved, which was to have taken immediate effect. He said there was also indications of willingness on all sides to enter into negotiations to reopen Sarajevo airport. Negotiations were to begin tomorrow morning, under the mediation of UNPROFOR.

However, at a press conference at Headquarters today, the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mohamed Sacirbey, said that hours before the cease-fire was to come into effect, shelling had resumed in Sarajevo and some of the surrounding towns. He added, "Maybe more importantly, we were informed that the Yugoslav Air Force attacked a couple of towns in the northern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Tusla."

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Expressing appreciation for the Security Council's imposition of sanctions against Yugoslavia, he said his Government was particularly pleased that the Council supported the establishment of a security zone encompassing Sarajevo and its airport. "The security zone will help unblock the flow of food and medicine to the people of Sarajevo," he said. "Obviously, we still need to see how in fact the security zone will be implemented and, frankly, hours and days means that more people are dying and more people lack medicine and more people may be starving."

Responding to reports of continuing bombardment of Sarajevo, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on Saturday urged President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia to use his influence with the Serbian side in Bosnia and Herzegoniva to bring an end to the shelling of the city. In a statement issued at Headquarters, he also said he had appealed to the Commander of the Serbian forces in the republic to cease the bombardment, and to the President of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, to facilitate the withdrawal of the blockaded members of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) from barracks in the city.

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The Security Council has imposed wide-ranging sanctions against Yugoslavia (now consisting of Serbia and Montenegro) with immediate effect, in an effort to end the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the other republics which were formerly part of the Yugoslav State.

The measure came into effect on Saturday when the Security Council adopted resolution 757 (1992), with no votes against and two absentions (China and Zimbabwe). Under that resolution, the Council called for an embargo on Yugoslav products and commodities, financial and economic contacts, sports contacts and scientific, technical and cultural exchanges. All States are required to deny take-off and landing rights for aircraft coming from or destined to land in Yugoslavia, unless the particular flight has been approved for humanitarian or other approved purposes.

The Council demanded that all parties create immediately the necessary conditions for unimpeded delivery of humanitarian supplies to Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the establishment of a security zone encompassing Sarajevo and its airport.

The Council noted that "in the very complex context of events in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, all parties bear some responsibility for the situation". But it deplored the failure of the Yugoslav authorities -- and the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) in particular -- to end its involvement in the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in accordance with the requirements of resolution 752 of 15 May.

Addressing the Council, Sir David Hannay, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations said it was not difficult to determine that multiple rocket launchers were "not simply found in a Serbian peasant's barn"; they were supplied and paid for by the authorities in Belgrade.

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Explaining his Government's decision to abstain, Li Daoya, Permanent Representative of China, said that China favoured appropriate measures by the international community for and early settlement of the crisis, but believed that opportunities still existed to resolve the crisis with other means than sanctions.

The sanctions are to remain in effect until the Council decides that the authorities in Yugoslavia, including the Army, have taken effective steps to fulfil the requirements of resolution 752.

* * *

In Geneva, the International Pledging Conference on the Drought Situation in Southern Africa, organized jointly by the United Nations and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), opened today at the Palais des Nations. The Conference aims at raising funds to ease the suffering Southern African countries who are experiencing the worst drought in decades.

Among those addressing the Conference, the President of Botswana and Chairman of the SADCC, Quett Ketumile Masire, described the desperate situation facing the 10 countries, saying that in Angola and Mozambique the war had devastated the economy and national institutions and dislocated communication and families.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Eliasson, told the meeting that the drought's impact was already severe on those most vulnerable, those least able to withstand the ravages. Malnutrition, hunger and lack of water had reached alarming levels, he said.

Pledges announced so far include a donation from Japan of $81 million; the United States has pledged 794,000 additional metric tonnes of food and $106 million in non-food assistance; Canada has donated Canadian $30 million Canadian dollars worth of food aid; and Switzerland has pledged $10 million.

Last week, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali appealed for $854 million to meet the urgent needs of the 10 States -- Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe -- most of which are traditional food-exporters that now look to the international community for relief from the drought.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali left New York this afternoon for Rio de Janeiro, where he will open the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development on Wednesday, 3 June.

According to his Spokesman, the Secretary-General will travel to Montevideo, Uruguay, for an official visit on Thursday, 4 June, and to Santiago de Chile for an official visit on Sunday, 7 June. He will then

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return to Rio to participate in the Summit. The Secretary-General will return to New York on Monday, 15 June.

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More than 100 Heads of State and Government will gather in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from Wednesday, 3 June, through Sunday, 14 June, for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

The Conference, also known as the "Earth Summit", will consider the adoption of a Rio Declaration on Environment and Development -- a set of 27 principles to govern the economic and environmental behaviour of individuals and nations in the quest for global sustainability. Participants will also discuss "Agenda 21", a blueprint for action for the sustainable development of planet Earth into the twenty-first century. The Agenda's recommendations to the Conference address issues such as protection of the oceans, transboundary air pollution, desertification and drought, as well as the role of indigenous peoples, the business community and women in implementing sustainable development. Delegates to the Earth Summit are also expected to sign a set of principles on the world's forests, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Framework Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Conference will involve an unprecedented level of participation by non-governmental organizations. They will convene at the "92 Global Forum" a series of parallel events and meetings.

A highlight of the Rio gathering will be the observance of World Environment Day, on 5 June, marking the twentieth anniversary of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden. There will be a tree-planting ceremony on the grounds of the Conference site, co-hosted by President Fernando Collor of Brazil and King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden.

The Secretary-General will open the Earth Summit on Wednesday, 3 June. It will include a seven-day general debate in plenary sessions; concurrent negotiating meetings of a Main Committee; and a two-day summit segment, starting on 12 June.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1153
2 June 1992

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ On the eve of United Nations Conference Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, its Secretary-General tells correspondents he does not expect commitment of Governments to come all at once, but predicts important first-step commitments on financial issues.

+ Secretary-General says Security Council decision to impose sanctions against Yugoslavia has created "new situation" regarding Council demand for withdrawal or disarming and disbanding of Yugoslav People's Army and Croatian Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Secretary-General expresses concern over recent developments in the Gaza Strip and especially safety and economic well-being of Palestinians residing there.

+ Secretary-General says "serious delays" in implementing cease-fire agreements signed by FMLN and Government of El Salvador last December have "undermined each side's confidence in the other's good faith".

+ Some $526 million pledged by participants at International Pledging Conference on the Drought Emergency in Southern Africa as it ends today in Geneva.

+ United Nations inspection team says Iraq appears to have destroyed its ballistic missiles production capability.

+ Trusteeship Council suspends current session after adopting series of conclusions and recommendations with respect to Palau.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived in Rio de Janeiro this morning, where he will open the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development tomorrow, 3 June.

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For information media--not an official record

On the eve of the environmental meeting, Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General of the Conference told the international press corps that in the two and a half years of preparations leading to the Conference, consensus had been reached on 98 per cent of some of the most complex, far-ranging and substantive issues ever put before the world. He cited the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development -- the 27 principles to govern behaviour in a sustainable world -- and made it clear it was necessary to reorient priorities as the world was now facing its greatest ever security challenge.

The UNCED Secretary-General stressed that once the concept of global security was accepted and given priority, one of the most cost-effective investments would be to help the developing world revitalize their economies and combat poverty which, he said, had become "morally repugnant" and destructive to the environment. Looking ahead, Mr. Strong said he did not expect the commitment of Governments to come all at once. What could be expected, he said, was that there would be important first-step commitments on the financial issues. However, the final test would be degree to which Governments actually carried out the commitments they undertake in Rio.

Meanwhile, a United Nations spokesman said today that so far 68 heads of State, 46 Prime Ministers, 7 Vice-Presidents and some 7,000 accredited press representatives had already arrived in Rio de Janeiro for tomorrow's historic Conference which will continue until Sunday, 14 June.

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The Security Council's decision to impose sanctions on Yugoslavia (Montenegro and Serbia) has created a "new situation" with regard to certain provisions of resolution 752 (1992), especially the Council's demand that all units of the Yugoslav people's Army (JNA) and elements of the Croatian Army now in Bosnia and Herzegovina be withdrawn; disbanded and disarmed; or be subject to the authority of the Government of that republic, the Secretary-General has stated.

In his report to the Security Council, dated 30 May, the Secretary-General said resolution 752 assumed that those processes would be agreed upon voluntarily by those in political and operational control of the troops concerned. He said it was "difficult to see how the solutions demanded by the Council could be achieved". The Secretary-General pointed to recent experience which, he said, has indicated that "less respect" was shown for an international presence in the former Yugoslavia than in other situations where international observers have played a role.

The Secretary-General expressed the hope that the determination of the international community to end the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina would make it easier to negotiate the necessary agreements.
(Document S/24049)

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The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Coordinator of Emergency Relief, Jan Eliasson, said he was "deeply heartened" by the generous response, and the Chairman of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), Quett Ketumile Masire, President of Botswana, said that the SADCC countries could now approach the coming months with greater certainty.

* * *

The Special Commission set up under Security Council resolution 687 (1991), in connection with the disposal of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, has verified that Iraq did destroy ballistic missiles and missile production equipment as it claimed on 19 March to have done.

The inspection team, which visited 15 designated sites in Iraq from 14 to 22 May, expressed confidence that, provided those missiles and equipment were indeed the essence of the country's ballistic production capability, that capability had been destroyed. However, it would not be able to state categorically that Iraq no longer had any production capability for proscribed ballistic missiles until the Special Commission received from Iraq the full disclosure of its proscribed weapons programmes, as required under the Security Council resolutions.

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The desire of the leadership of Palau, the last remaining Territory of the International Trusteeship System, to end trusteeship at an early date and the firm support of the Administering Authority for a settlement of Palau's political status were emphasized this morning as the Trusteeship Council suspended its 59th session.

During its six-day meeting, the Council considered the political, economic and social advancement of Palau, as it examined the annual report of the Administering Authority, the United States, considered the findings of a recent Visiting Mission to the Territory and heard statements by representatives of the territorial government and of a petitioner representing a group of Palauan citizens.

As Shirin Tahil-Kheli, the representative of the Administering Authority, pointed out to the Council in her concluding statement, if the upcoming plebiscite in Palau is successful, the United Nations Trusteeship System will become a thing of the past.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has deplored the recent developments in the Gaza Strip, where tension remains high following several violent incidents, according to a statement issued at Headquarters today.

The Secretary-General especially expressed concern about the safety and protection of Palestinian civilians residing in the area, with respect both to their physical and economic well-being. Citing the Security Council's Presidential Statement of 4 April, he urged Israel to abide scrupulously by its obligations under the 1949 Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians in time of war.

* * *

"Serious delays" in implementing various provisions of the cease-fire agreements signed by the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) and the Government of El Salvador last December have undermined each side's confidence in the other's good faith, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

In his new report to the Security Council on the situation in El Salvador, dated 26 May, he says the process to end the 12-year civil conflict and return to a normal political process "is not an easy one". The Secretary-General particularly expresses concern about what he calls "the continuing failure of both sides to concentrate all their forces in the designated locations" which was supposed to have been completed by 2 March. He says suspicions that the FMLN is "retaining clandestine caches of arms and ammunition" have had a destabilizing effect on the whole implementation process.

The Secretary-General reported that during a telephone conversation on 15 May, Schafik Handal of the General Command of the FMLN told him that FMLN was participating seriously in the meetings with the Government and wanted to adhere to the existing agreements and not renegotiate them. Mr. Boutros-Ghali expressed his steadfast support for the agreements and his readiness to do all he could to help both sides implement them.
(Document S/23999)

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The equivalent of $526 million was pledged by participants in the two-day International Pledging Conference on the Drought Emergency in Southern Africa which ended today in Geneva. The funds are intended to help address the crisis which threatens 18 million people in the region with starvation.

The Conference adopted a statement in which it strongly urged all interested parties to do all possible to facilitate emergency relief operations, to cooperate fully to ensure a coordinated regional response to the drought and to guarantee the safe passage and facilitate the distribution of humanitarian relief supplies via land, sea and air.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1154
3 June 1992

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General warns against fragility of planet Earth and stresses connection between human survival and environmental protection, in opening address at United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, expresses deep concern about delays by both Government of El Salvador and Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional in implementing New York Agreements.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, addressing the opening meeting of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro this morning, warned about the fragility of planet earth, saying "the time of the finite world has come" -- a world in which we are "under house arrest". Stressing the connection between human survival and environmental protection, he said, "one cannot protect a natural resource by denying its use to those who depend on it for survival".

The Secretary-General pointed out that global warming was caused by the gases which constituted "the very underpinnings of industrialized societies". He said "this means that the lifestyle of rich countries is ecologically unsound, and that their development cannot, at the present stage, be considered 'sustainable'". But it was "in the poor countries that the depletion of resources is most serious," he said, "given that those countries are obliged to overwork the natural resources on which their survival depends. They are compelled to sacrifice their future to eke out a precarious daily existence".

If the concept of development was not expanded further, he warned, the earth would find itself confronted with the paradox that it would be suffering both from overdevelopment and underdevelopment. The term "development" must mean both "sustainable development" and "planetary development". In this context, he pointed out that a portion of military spending must be redirected to planetary development projects.

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For information media—not an official record

Stressing that action had to be taken in the face of uncertainty, the Secretary-General called for innovative ways of "promoting dialogue between science and politics in the context of the follow-up to this Conference".

Following the Secretary-General's address, Brazilian President Fernando Collor was elected President of the Conference by consensus. Among other speakers today were Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General of the Conference; King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden; the Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, who is also Chairman of the World Commission on Environment and Development; and the President of Portugal, Mario Soares.

Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will attend a ceremony concerning the signature of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. He will then depart from Rio for his official visit to Montevideo, Uruguay.

* * *

The President of the Security Council, Peter Noterdaeme (Belgium), in a presidential statement issued on behalf of the Council today, expressed deep concern about the many delays by both parties in implementing agreements concluded between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN), and "the climate of mutual suspicion that still remains". If that situation were to continue, the statement said, it would "jeopardize the very foundation of the agreements".

The Council was responding to the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador, dated 26 May. It welcomed the fact that the cease-fire was holding and that there had not been a single iolation since it came into force on 1 February, but urged both parties to demonstrate good faith in fully implementing the agreements. They also called on the parties to abide by the agreed time limits, to exert every effort to bring about national reconciliation in El Salvador and to implement the process of demobilization and reform.

The members of the Council reaffirmed their full support for the efforts made by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Iqbal Riza, with the assistance of the "Friends of the Secretary-General" and the other Governments concerned. They expressed their concern about threats to the safety of the staff of ONUSAL, who were working under very difficult conditions, and they reminded the parties of their obligation to take all necessary measures to guarantee the safety of ONUSAL members.

Also on the agenda of Security Council consultations this morning were the report of the Secretary-General on the question of Western Sahara; his report regarding the presence of the Yugoslav People's Army and elements of the Croatian Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and a letter from the Palestine Liberation Organization.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1155
4 June 1992

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, witnessing signing of Framework Climate Change Convention in Rio de Janeiro, says Convention is "a modest first step" which contains important commitments to take action.

+ Security Council endorses Secretary-General's recommendation to extend mandate of United Nations Mission for Referendum in Western Sahara until end of August; talks currently under way between parties concerned and Secretary-General's Special Representative to reactivate settlement plan for territory.

+ Secretary-General recommends Security Council extend mandate of United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus for another six-month period, until 15 December; says size and mandate of Force might be changed.

+ Secretary-General leaves Rio for official visits to Uruguay and Chile.

+ Main Committee of Environment and Development Conference in Rio establishes eight contact groups to complete negotiations on unresolved issues facing Rio Summit.

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The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, one of the central elements of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), now taking place in Rio de Janeiro, was opened for signature at a ceremony this morning. President Fernando Collor of Brazil, host of the Conference, was the first signer.

In an address, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali described the Convention as "a modest first step" which contained important commitments for action. It was a pragmatic convention, he said, reflecting the prevailing political realities and economic caution. An "ideal" convention, the strength of which would have been "eviscerated by the absence of key actors", would not have been much more than a slogan.

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For information media—not an official record

"One may hope," the Secretary-General continued, "that its very modesty will motivate Governments and observers to maintain constructive pressure to strengthen the Convention over the coming years, as more scientific evidence comes in and as it is better appreciated that actions to protect the climate can generate economic benefits over time."

In closing, he said "we may hope that this Convention will be a building block of a world order in which all countries and all peoples will have equitable access to opportunities for sustainable development."

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The Security Council has endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until the end of August. The Mission consists at present of 349 United Nations military observers and other personnel deployed to monitor the cease-fire in the region.

In a statement issued today by Council President Peter Noterdaeme (Belgium), the Council welcomed talks now under way between the Government of Morocco, POLISARIO and the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Yaqub Khan, with a view to reactivating the settlement plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. The Council asked the Secretary-General to submit at the earliest possible date a further progress report on implementation of the plan.

The Council President's statement today was in response to a report by the Secretary-General on the situation in Western Sahara, dated 29 May. The Secretary-General had reported that although cease-fire violations continued to occur and their frequency had even increased somewhat, the incidents generally had not been of a violent nature. Further, his Special Representative had been assured by both the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) and the Government of Morocco that they would make every effort to adhere to the provisions of the cease-fire agreement and to cooperate with MINURSO within the framework of the settlement plan.

The Secretary-General expressed hope that substantial progress would have been made by August to prepare the ground for holding a referendum to lead to the peaceful settlement of the Western Sahara conflict. If by that time the peace process remained deadlocked, in spite of current talks with the parties, he said, the Council might wish to consider a different approach.
Document S/24059 and S/24040

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In a new report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General has recommended that it extend the mandate of the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) for a further six-month period, until 15 December. The functions of the Force is preventing a recurrence of fighting between the two parties "remain valid and necessary", he says, until a comprehensive

solution to the conflict is found. He notes that his recommendation will be subject to possible changes in the size and mandate of the Force following consultations with the troop-contributing countries and the two parties.

In his report of 31 May, the Secretary-General further points to the "chronic and ever-deepening financial crisis" of the Force, which, imposes a "most unfair burden" on the troop-contributing countries. The best way to finance the Force would be for the United Nations share of the costs to be financed from assessed contributions.

In a previous report, dated 3 April, the Secretary-General questioned the continuation of United Nations peace-keeping in Cyprus "on the present scale" because of "lack of progress" by the two sides -- the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities -- in concluding an agreement as well as the unsatisfactory financial situation of UNFICYP.

Responding to that report, the Security Council decided to remain involved in the Cyprus question "on an ongoing and direct basis". It called on the parties concerned to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General on holding a high-level international meeting to conclude an overall framework agreement.
Document S/24050

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The Secretary-General left Rio de Janeiro this afternoon for official visits to Uruguay and Chile.

In Montevideo tomorrow, 5 June, he will have talks with the President of Uruguay, Luis Alberto Lacalle, and in the afternoon will meet with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hector Gross Espiell.

On Sunday, the Secretary-General will fly to Chile, and on Monday morning, 8 June, in Santiago, he is to meet with the Chilean Minister for Foreign Affairs, Enrique Silva Cimma. In the evening he will be the guess of honor at a dinner given by President Patricio Aylwin Azocar, at the Palacio de la Moneda.

On 9 June, the Secretary-General will visit the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), where he will meet with its Executive Director, Gert Rosenthal. He will also participate in a meeting with the heads of United Nations offices in Chile. Mr. Boutros-Ghali is scheduled to return to Rio de Janeiro that afternoon.

* * *

At its first meeting this afternoon, the Main Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) decided, without a vote, to establish eight open-ended contact groups, open to all Governments attending the Conference. The aim of the contact groups is to complete negotiations on the main outstanding issues before the Conference, including

financial resources, technology transfer, atmosphere, forest principles and institutions for continuing UNCED's work.

In an opening statement, Committee Chairman Tommy Koh (Singapore) reminded delegations that "Agenda 21", UNCED's plan of action, contains more than 80 bracketed paragraphs. To meet the deadline of 10 June, he proposed, and the Committee approved, the establishment of the contact groups and the holding of night meetings as well as meetings on Saturday, 6 June.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1156
5 June 1992

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General appeals for $180 million in new resources for United Nations agencies to aid Afghanistan; expresses deep concern over the recent fighting in Kabul.

+ Speakers addressing Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro stress that different regions have different environmental problems, and solutions must be individually tailored.

+ Security Council sanctions against Yugoslavia creates difficulties for relief operations, according to spokeswoman for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

+ On 25th anniversary of Israeli occupation, Palestinian Rights Committee protests conditions in West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today appealed to the international community to provide $180 million to United Nations agencies for emergency humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan. He pointed out that the consolidation of peace and national unity would contribute to the success of the appeal.

In a report today, the Secretary-General said the resources sought in the current appeal were to meet the emergency requirements of the next seven months (June to December) and to cover a shortfall of over $76 million in the ongoing Operation Salam Programme for 1992.

"The level of destruction in Afghanistan is hard to imagine unless witnessed at first hand", the Secretary-General states in the appeal. With few of the donor countries and no international financial institutions having reestablished their presence in the country, the humanitarian activity of the United Nations system takes on a critical importance.

In a separate statement issued at Headquarters today, the Secretary-General expressed concern about the recent eruption of fighting in

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For information media—not an official record

Kabul resulting in many deaths. He called on all parties concerned to exercise restraint, resolve their differences by dialogue and release those who had been kidnapped.

No effort should be spared, he said, to consolidate peace, promote national unity and safeguard the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country. "The greatest challenge facing the Afghan people and their leaders is the reconstruction and rehabilitation of their devastated country, and to facilitate the return of the millions of Afghan refugees who have been waiting for a decade to return to their homeland." The United Nations stood ready to assist them in meeting that challenge, concluded the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Benon Sevan, who led a United Nations inter-agency team to Afghanistan from 11 to 15 May 1992, discussed the appeal with correspondents at Headquarters today. He said that 14 years of war had left the Afghan public sector in a state of total collapse. Mr. Sevan stressed that even without the problem of repatriating more than 6 million refugees, the country faced an emergency situation.

* * *

Continuing the general debate of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, many speakers have emphazised that different regions have different environmental problems, and solutions have to be individually tailored.

They said that in the North, the talk was about the quality of life, while in the South, life itself was at stake. For the poor, the discussion of global issues in various multilateral conventions was unconnected to any reality of which they were aware. For those people, improving the environment meant safe surroundings and housing.

Thorbjorn Berntsen, Minister for the Environment of Norway stressed that attacking poverty through policy change must be a main element of the follow-up to the Conference. International transfer of financial resources to developing countries was essential, he said, and Norway would continue to maintain a high level of development assistance as well as contribute new and additional finances for measures to combat environmental problems, he said.

William H. Draper III, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said no global plan to protect the common habitat would be realistic unless the needs and concerns of people in developing countries are taken into consideration. Such a plan would succeed only if North and South could work together and only if environment was perceived as a unifying link, not a divisive issue, he said.

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The Security Council's resolution 757 (1992), which imposed mandatory sanctions against Yugoslavia on 30 May, is causing some difficulty for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In a statement from Geneva this morning, the Spokeswoman for UNHCR, Sylvana Foa, said trucks carrying relief supplies had been held up at the Austrian/German border and the Agency was having difficulty withdrawing money from the bank and obtaining fuel, which she cited as its biggest problem.

According to Ms. Foa, article 10 of the resolution exempts the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR); the Conference on Yugoslavia; and the European Community Monitor Mission from the sanctions. But it does not specify United Nations relief agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the World Health Organization (WHO); or UNHCR. She said UNHCR had asked the Sanctions Committee for official recognition as a humanitarian agency and for "a blank check" to enable UNHCR to operate effectively. Under article five of the resolution, money could not be transferred into the area except for humanitarian purposes.

Ms. Foa said that an estimated 1.71 million displaced and refugees representing "more than 10 per cent of the world's refugees today" were in Europe, compared to a year and a half ago when only three per cent were there. She listed over 1.3 million displaced persons in Yugoslavia; 275,000 registered refugees and an estimated 100,000 unregistered refugees in other countries of Europe.

* * *

Today is the 25th anniversary of the beginning of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem. Marking the occasion in a letter to the Secretary-General, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People says that Israel's ongoing occupation and refusal to implement the decisions of the Security Council and General Assembly threaten the credibility of the United Nations at a time of historic importance for its efforts to create a more just and peaceful world.

Summing up the impact of the occupation, the Committee states that over 60 percent of the West Bank and Gaza have been confiscated, and some 23,000 Israeli citizens have moved permanently to about 212 settlements throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, declaring it part of a so-called "Greater Israel".

Since the start of the intifadah, it notes, the repression and oppression of the Palestinian civilian population have increased. From December 1987 to March of this year, human rights organizations have reported that at least 1,032 Palestinians have been killed and over 121,000 injured by Israeli forces.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1157
8 June 1992

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General recommends that mandate and strength of United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia be enlarged to handle full operational responsibility for Sarajevo airport, to ensure delivery of humanitarian aid to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Secretary-General calls off visit to Chile due to poor weather conditions yesterday.

+ Indigenous peoples demand to be considered equally at United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

+ Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, finds improvement in security situation in Kompong Thom region.

+ Secretary-General appoints General Ricardo Galarza of Uruguay as Commander of United Nations Observer Group in India and Pakistan.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the Security Council enlarge the mandate and strength of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) to "take over full operational responsibility for the functioning and security of Sarajevo airport". The recommendation follows an agreement reached on Friday, 5 June, with the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with the Bosnian Serb side to reopen Sarajevo airport for the delivery of humanitarian supplies under the exclusive authority of the United Nations.

In his report to the Council, dated 6 June, the Secretary-General called the agreement "a significant breakthrough in the tragic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina". Under resolution 757 (1992) of 30 May, which imposed wide-ranging sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, the Council had demanded that "all parties and others concerned" create the necessary conditions for unimpeded humanitarian assistance to that region, including the establishment of a security zone encompassing Sarajevo and its airport. The Council asked the Secretary-General to use his good offices in achieving that objective.

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For information media—not an official record

According to the Secretary-General's proposal, UNPROFOR would verify the withdrawal of anti-aircraft weapons systems from within range of the airport and its approaches and monitor the concentration of artillery, mortar, and ground-to-ground missile systems in specified areas. He proposed further that the new operation be implemented in four phases immediately following approval by the Council, and that a fifth UNPROFOR sector headquarters be established at Sarajevo in order to undertake the new tasks arising for the Force.

According to an addendum to the report, the additional cost of the enlargement of UNPROFOR for a four-month period until mid-October 1992 would amount to $20.1 million. Thereafter, the monthly cost for the enlargement would amount to some $3 million. A United Nations spokesman cautioned that the cost might go up beyond the initial estimates.

The Secretary-General pointed in his report to "significant risks" with regard to the operation, saying that "many earlier agreements in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been broken". However, he wrote, the humanitarian emergency in Sarajevo and elsewhere in that Republic "grows daily more severe and there is an ever more urgent need to bring the fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina under control".

The Security Council held consultations concerning the Secretary-General's proposal throughout today.
Document S/24075 & S/24075/Add.1

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Poor weather conditions in southern South America on Sunday forced the Secretary-General to postpone his official visit to Chile scheduled to have begun today.

He was due to depart yesterday for Santiago from Montevideo, Uruguay, where he had been on an official visit. The decision to cancel the trip was made after several hours of waiting at Carrasco International Airport and a telephone conversation with the Foreign Minister of Chile, Enrique Silva Cimma. The Secretary-General was to have met today with Chilean President Patricio Aylwin Azocar and the Foreign Minister. He said in a cable sent later to President Aylwin that he hoped to visit Chile in the near future.

Weather permitting, the Secretary-General planned to return to Rio de Janeiro this afternoon, so that he can resume his participation in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

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Indigenous peoples are demanding to be considered equally at the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. According to a report today, indigenous peoples also want official status as "First Nations" in the Organization. The United Nations has declared 1993 as the International Year

(more)

of Indigenous Peoples of the World, and such recognition, they say, will guarantee their "real and equal participation" in the decision-making process on all issues affecting their territories.

In a press statement today, Tony Mercredi, representative of Canada's Assembly of First Nations, said indigenous groups had come to the environmental conference as non-governmental organizations, but they had been unable to speak about their "plight and suffering".

Indigenous groups at the Conference have pointed out that for centuries they have been subjected to "colonialist, systematic exploitation and destruction of their natural resources". They cite a wide range of "environmental disasters" such as toxic contamination, hydro-electric projects, dams, deforestation, mining, militarization and other environmental disasters, which they say have eroded their traditional lifestyles. The groups have said that what is at stake at this time is the survival of civilizations whose wisdom and knowledge are crucial to the continuity of mankind.

* * *

There has been a significant improvement in the security situation in the Kompong Thom province, according to the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi.

During a visit to the region over the weekend accompanied by Force Commander Lieutenant-General John Sanderson, Mr. Akashi noted that cease-fire violations in the province were decreasing, and the people were responding positively to the increasing United Nations presence. However, difficulties remained, especially along Route 12, where the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea had recently laid new mines. The demining of the route could be accomplished quickly, General Sanderson said, preferably by those who laid the mines. Some 7,000 armed forces from all four factions are scheduled to be cantoned in this region.

Phase two of the Paris Agreements of October 1991 between the four Cambodian parties is expected to begin on 13 June. On that day, the process of regrouping and cantonment will begin with the armed forces placing themselves under the control of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) to be disarmed and await demobilization.

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The Secretary-General has decided to appoint General Ricardo Jorge Galarzo Chans of Uruguay as Chief Military Observer of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), with effect from 26 June. He will replace Brigadier-General Jeremiah Enright of Ireland, who will be retiring from military service.

General Galarza, who began his military career in 1952, is presently the Commanding Officer of the Second Armed Division in Uruguay. Recently, he

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served as Chief of his country's delegation to the Inter-American Defense Board and as Technical Advisor to Uruguay's delegation to the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington.

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